CLEAN VERSION OF ALL CLAIMS

1. A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer obtainable by free-radical polymerization of

a) 80 to 20% by weight of hydroxy-C_1-C_6-alkyl (meth)acrylate and, where appropriate, one or more compounds of the formula (A) or (B)

SUB B1

with R^1 = H, C_1-C_6-alkyl,

R^2 = H, CH_3,

R^3 = C_1-C_{24}-alkyl

or mixtures thereof

in the presence of

b) 20 to 80% by weight of polyvinyl alcohol (PVA) and

c) where appropriate 0 to 20% by weight of other polymerizable compounds (C).

2. A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein the free-radical polymerization is an emulsion polymerization.

A1

3. (amended) A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein hydroxyethyl methacrylate is employed as hydroxy-C_1-C_6-alkyl (meth)acrylate.

4. (amended) A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein the compounds of the formula (A)

are selected from the group of methyl methacrylate, methyl acrylate, methyl acrylate, or mixtures thereof.

5. (amended) A water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1, wherein the compounds of the formula (B) are selected from the group of C_3-C_{24}-vinyl esters.

6. (amended) A process for preparing water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymers as claimed in claim 1 by free-radical polymerization in an aqueous or nonaqueous but water-miscible solvent or in mixed nonaqueous/aqueous solvents.

7. A process as claimed in claim 6, wherein the polymerization takes place in the presence of from 30 to 55% by weight of polyvinyl alcohol.

8. (amended) A pharmaceutical dosage form comprising at least one water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymer as claimed in claim 1 as coating agent, binder and/or film-forming excipient.

9. (amended) The use of water-soluble or water-dispersible copolymers as claimed in claim 1 as coating agent, binder and/or film-forming excipient in pharmaceutical dosage forms.